

*"The point is, that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines"*

*From Chapter Five of the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous."*

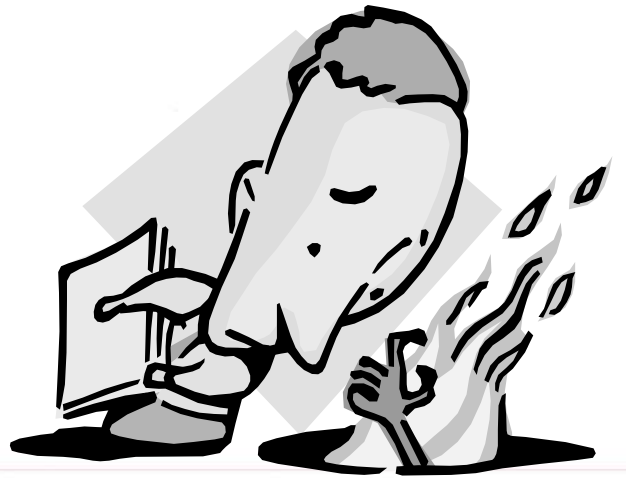
# The Point

2012  
**2**  
February

A publication  
of the Intercounty Fellowship  
of Alcoholics Anonymous

1821 Sacramento Street  
San Francisco CA 94109-3528  
(415) 674-1821  
Fax (415) 674-1801  
aa@aa-san-francisco.org


Those  
Who



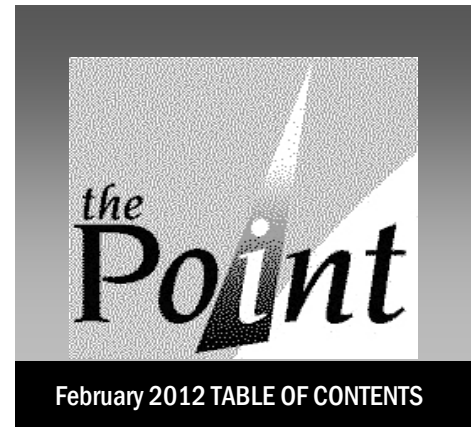
Do Not Recover

- 
- 6 The Writing on The Wall
  - 8 Interview with a Longtimer

# February 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
<p><i>Persons requiring reasonable accommodations at meetings of the IFB, COC, IFB committees or service events sponsored by the preceding entities, including ASL interpreters, assistive listening devices or print materials in alternative formats, should contact Central Office at (415) 674-1821 no less than five business days prior to the event.</i></p> 			<p><b>1</b> <u>FIRST WED</u> Intergroup Meeting 1187 Franklin St. Orientation 6pm Meeting 7pm</p>
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>7</b> <u>FIRST TUE</u> Access Committee Central Office 6pm</p>	<p><b>8</b> <u>SECOND WED</u> Marin Bridging the Gap 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club 6:30pm</p>
<p><b>12</b></p>	<p><b>13</b> <u>SECOND MON</u> SF Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) Committee Central Office 7pm</p>	<p><b>14</b> <u>SECOND TUE</u> <i>The Point</i> Committee Central Office 5:30pm SF Bridging the Gap 1111 O'Farrell St 6:30pm Marin H&amp;I 1360 Lincoln San Rafael 6:15pm SF General Service 1111 O'Farrell St 8pm</p>	<p><b>15</b></p>
<p><b>19</b> <u>THIRD SUN</u> Archives Committee Central Office 2pm Business Meeting followed by Work Day</p>	<p><b>20</b> <b>CENTRAL OFFICE CLOSED</b> <u>THIRD MON</u> SF Teleservice Central Office Business Meeting 6pm Orientation 6:30pm Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd., San Rafael 8pm</p>	<p><b>21</b> <u>THIRD TUE</u> Outreach Committee Central Office 6:30pm</p>	<p><b>22</b></p>
<p><b>26</b></p>	<p><b>27</b></p>	<p><b>28</b> <u>FOURTH TUE</u> <i>The Point</i> Committee Central Office 5:30pm Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club 7:30pm</p>	

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
2	3	4
9	10	11
16	17	18
<b>23</b> <u>LAST THU</u> SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento St, SF Orientation 7:15pm Committee Meeting 8pm	24	25
		



### F. Y. I.

Calendar	2
Meeting Changes	4

### DEPARTMENTS

From the Editor	5
How It Works	7
Year of the Twelve	9
Meet the Meeting	10
February in A.A. History	11
Help@aasf.org	12
Meet the Meeting	13

### BUSINESS

Faithful Fivers	5
IFB Meeting Summary	14
Group Contributions	16
P&L	18

---

“In spite of the great increase in the size and the span of this Fellowship, at its core it remains simple and personal.”

*Big Book, p.xxii*

---



# Meeting Changes

### Meeting Changes:

M	6:00	San Anselmo	MONDAY NIGHT MADNESS 921 Sir Francis Drake Blvd., Red Hill Church <i>(was 718 4th St., San Rafael)</i>
M/Tu/F	7:00am	Rt. Reyes Station	MORNING ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT HHS Building, 6th St. at A St. <i>(was temporarily at Fire Dept.)</i>
M-F	6:00pm	SOMA	SAY HEY GROUP 345 7th St., btw. Harrison and Folsom, Ukrainian Orthodox Church <i>(was 225 Berry St. at 4th St., Mission Creek)</i>
W	7:00pm	Rt. Reyes Station	WEDNESDAY NIGHT SPEAKER DISC. HHS Building, 6th St. at A St. <i>(was temporarily at Fire Dept.)</i>
Th	7:00pm	Rt. Reyes Station	THURSDAY NIGHT BOOK CLUB HHS Building, 6th St. at A St. <i>(was temporarily at Fire Dept.)</i>
Th	8:00	Mill Valley	MILL VALLEY ORIGINAL SMOKELESS 410 Sycamore Ave./Camino Alto. Now only 1 hr. <i>(was 90 min.)</i>
Sa	8:00am	Rt. Reyes Station	MORNING ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT HHS Building, 6th St. at A St. <i>(was temporarily at Fire Dept.)</i>
Sa	8:10am	Marina	WILLING TO GROW Fort Mason, Bldg C, Room 370, Buchanan St./Marina Blvd., MD 11th Step WH <i>(was 8:15am SATURDAY MORNING LIVE, BG)</i>

### No Longer Meeting:

Su	3:00 pm	Mission	AA-ASL WOMEN'S GROUP 3673 20th St./Guerrero St..
W	8:15pm	Tenderloin	FIRST PLACE BIG BOOK 410 Ellis St./Jones St.

**PLEASE NOTE:** We occasionally receive reports that meetings listed in our schedule are missing or no longer active. Sometimes these reports turn out to be mistaken—and sometimes not. **If you know *anything* about a meeting that has relocated or disbanded — even if only temporarily — please call Central Office immediately: (415) 674-1821.** This helps us direct newcomers, visitors and sober, local alcoholics alike to actual meetings and not to rooms that housed a meeting once upon a time. **Thank you for contributing to the accuracy of our schedule!**

## Plea For Information

The Access Committee of the Intercounty Fellowship is working to increase awareness and solutions for people who experience difficulties in accessing the recovery message of A.A. This may be of a visual, auditory, mobility, literacy or other nature. Our mission is to ensure the inclusion of all those who seek to stop drinking in our fellowship of recovery.

Toward that end we are seeking input from people who encounter barriers to accessing the message of A.A. as presented in traditionally structured meetings and literature. Have you or anyone you know experienced any barriers that we can work to remove? Please contact us at [access@asf.org](mailto:access@asf.org).

From the Editor

## This Simple Program

by Mike M.

Can you give yourself completely to this simple program? I think of many people over the years who have complained, meeting after meeting, "I've never done a Fourth Step. It's too painful. I can't possibly afford to make amends for all the money I owe. I'm just keeping sober one day at a time and going to meetings." Most of them have disappeared from the rooms. Eventually word drifted back, "So and so is out again – could never face that Fourth Step!"

On page 7, a retread tells a familiar story of coming to A.A. after a DUI conviction, but remaining convinced he wasn't ready to take Step One, believing his problem wasn't like ours. Another year of experimentation and an unlikely meeting with an A.A. in a bar who had a peaceful glow that he wanted, finally convinced him to try this simple program again. When he returned and gave himself to A.A. completely, he was able to put an end to his misery and isolation. Every retread, myself included, will identify with his message.

Our meetings are places to better learn how to completely give ourselves to the program. In our dual "Meet the Meeting" articles, we feature the Gold Mine and the Queers, Crackpots & Fallen Women meetings in San Francisco. Finding a place where we feel at home can be key to keeping on track. Whether you're having meeting burnout or are a newcomer looking for places to go, here are two special groups you might come to call home.

"February in A.A. History" focuses on a 1963 article in *Harper's Magazine* bemoaning that A.A. has turned into a religious movement and a hindrance to the alcoholic who needs a "different" kind of help. This is familiar ground to anyone who has ever used the religion angle as a defense against A.A.

While we don't have any articles about dead presidents or the dangers of 13<sup>th</sup> Stepping, we hope this issue offers food for thought, examples of acceptance, willingness and humility, some humor, and other tools to enlighten and sustain the reader. It is our ongoing Valentine of service to you.



### EDITORIAL POLICY

*The Point* is published monthly to inform A.A. members about business and meeting affairs of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. In addition, *The Point* publishes original feature articles submitted by local A.A. members that reflect the full diversity of experience and opinion found within the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. No one viewpoint or philosophy dominates its pages, and in determining the editorial content, the editors rely on the principles of the Twelve Traditions.

(This is a summary; for the full editorial policy, please go to [www.aasf.org](http://www.aasf.org).)



Faithful Fivers are A.A. members who graciously pledge to contribute at least \$5.00 each month toward the support of Central Office. Faithful Fiver contributions go a long way in helping make our vital services possible. We thank the following members:

Alejandro D.	Lauren H.	Tim M.
Andrea C.	Layne S.	Tom S.
Ardella H.	Lelan & Rich H.	Tracy F.
Barbara L.	Leo H.	William M.
Blu F.	Linda L.	
Braden B.	Lisa M.	Your
Brian O.	Lynne L.	Name
Bruce S.	Mabel T.	Here!
Carole K.	Marit L.	
Caroline A.	Mark A.	Or
Casey L.	Mark B.	Here!
Charles D.	Mark O.	
Charlie O.	Martha S.	Or
Chris L.	Mary C.	Here!
Chris S.	Maryellen O.	
Chuck S.	Michael G.	
C.J. H.	Michael P.	
David J.	Michael W.	
David S.	Michael Z.	
Dennis & Lucy O.	Mike M.	
Dianne E.	Molly G.	
Ed H.	Nancy W.	
Eric P.	Niels R.	
Evan K.	Pat P.	
Fay K.	Patrick M.	
Gregory G.	Paul M.	
James W.	Peg L.	
Jane K.	Pene P.	
Janet B.	Phillip B.	
Jeff B.	Ralf & Jocelyn	
Jodie S.	Rich G.	
John C.	Rick H.	
John G.	Robert C.	
John M.	Robert W.	
John V.	Samuel W.	
Karen C.	Sara D.	
Karen K.	Sheila H.	
Kathleen C.	Steve A.	
Kathryn M.	Steve F.	
Kevin S.	Stu S.	
Kristina F.	Susan G.	
Kurt P.	Terry H.	

*If you would like to become a Faithful Fiver, please download a pledge form from our website. You will receive a complimentary subscription to The Point. And remember, individual contributions are 100% tax deductible!*

# The Writing on the Wall

## A Sober Message from Above

by Suzan C.

It was actual writing, on a physical wall, that brought me into Alcoholics Anonymous. It led me to the Second Step on the second day of my sobriety, and has kept me sober for 21 years since. The only part of my story crazier than life-changing graffiti was the fact that my dog found it. For those of you who are still reading, here's what happened.

I went to my first A.A. meeting at a halfway house near Buena Vista Park. My former drinking buddy took me there. I looked around the room

of 50 plus people and questioned whether I could ever consider this crowd to be "my people." I only focused on the ones who looked the least like me. Not long into the speaker's share, however, I realized he was talking about me. Oops.

After the meeting, my friend and future sponsor smiled and asked what I thought. I recall fidgeting considerably: "I don't know, I did relate to what that guy was talking about, but I just don't know if I really belong here, it seems kind of extreme." My friend replied, "Why don't you just pray about it?"

That night, I felt such an enormous quaking in my world that I found myself compelled to try praying (in the bathroom where my husband could not hear me). There, on the furry mauve bath mat, I knelt and prayed for the first time since my last near-death drinking encounter. But instead of, "Hey, if you get me out of this one I'll donate fifty dollars to United Way," I said something very different: "If there's somebody up there, and you think I should do this A.A. thing, then please give me some kind of sign." I continued kneeling for a few seconds. Then, I heard something. It was so clear and so literal, that I had to look around the room a moment: "You'll get your answer tomorrow."

When tomorrow came, I remembered that the house was being fumigated for fleas, so I had to take the dog out for most of the day. We walked out the front door, down the Panhandle and into Golden Gate Park. I felt my mind clear with every step we took in the cool morning air. We continued through the park to Ocean

Beach. My dog excitedly ran toward the shore, and I turned south, the waves pounding their steady drum beside me.

My dog and I walked another half hour down the beach and as we came upon a group of kids playing in the ocean, my dog ran over to them. This was odd, considering his usual shyness. He hunched over and pooped right in the midst of these young children wading. Some mothers ran over and yanked their kids out of the water, shooting me an angry glare. I grabbed my dog and quickly headed toward the boardwalk.

*The world closed in  
around my head, and  
there was only the voice*

Nearing the concrete stairs, I noticed huge writing scrawled on the retaining wall with black spray paint: "6-1-90. What Next?" An enormous "sign" containing my sobriety date and a question. As I stood there, my mouth gaping open, I started to hear that voice again. The world closed in around my head, and there was only the voice: "What next means how do you want to live your life. Do you want to continue struggling with alcohol and trying to control it, or do you want to be free?" Was it a hallucinogenic flashback? An urban mirage? Does it matter? Since then I have never looked back or picked up a drink.





by GFG

*Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program*

I am an A.A. retread: I came into A.A., went back out, and then returned. I wasn't convinced that I was an alcoholic or that I could give myself to this simple program. My first A.A. meeting was after my DWI. I was scared. I didn't know what to expect from an A.A. meeting. I thought A.A. was a strange sub-culture of people who discussed their alcoholism. I didn't know how to conduct myself at their meetings. People introduced themselves to me before the meeting, and all I said was "hello." I didn't stay after the meetings, so I didn't meet people and learn about the program.

I attended A.A. meetings for one month. At those meetings, I thought about how I did not fit the description of the alcoholic as I heard others share their experience, strength, and hope. I was the exception: a special case. I thought the shares didn't really apply to me. I thought, "I am different from them," or "my extenuating circumstances justified my behavior and drinking,"

## GIVING MYSELF COMPLETELY

or "I really didn't drink that much."

I didn't relate to the other A.A.s., did not read the literature, get a sponsor, or volunteer for service. I was not ready to give myself entirely to the A.A. program. So I went out for over one year. When I returned to A.A., I was good and ready. I spent one year feeling isolated, miserable, and depressed. I knew there was an answer to my problems but was unable and unwilling to accept that answer: to completely give myself to the A.A. program.

One Friday evening, I was at a bar drinking a beer, when an attractive man walked in: "Bob," from Montana. Bob and a friend went to the bar, ordered two bottles of Calistoga, turned around, and smiled. Bob walked up to me and we talked. Bob told me that they had come for refreshment before going to an A.A. meeting. I laughed, "Oh, I tried A.A. once, but it didn't really work for me."

For that past year, I had felt lonely, even desolate. There was this hole in my soul that alcohol couldn't fill. When I talked to Bob, I saw a certain glow about him – his sobriety. We talked for a while, Bob finished his water, we said goodbye, and he went

to his meeting. That was it. The seed was planted. I couldn't get A.A. out of my head. Was A.A. the answer to my problems? I wanted to have that same glow that Bob had. I put down my drink, went home, and planned to go to an A.A. meeting the next day.

I went to a meeting that next morning. I was ready to leave my old, miserable existence and to try something new. I had hoped to see Bob at the meeting, but I didn't: I never saw him again. I admitted that I had a problem with alcohol, and I trusted A.A. with my life and my sobriety. I was then able to "completely give myself to this simple program." I achieved some level of humility by making this admission.

Today I attend A.A. meetings, do service, talk to other alcoholics, and work the steps with my sponsor. My life has changed. I no longer sit in the rooms unable to identify with the program. I now identify in some part with everyone who comes into the rooms, from all walks of life. I worked the steps with my sponsor, and I do what he suggests. I've been sober twenty years and have become happy, joyous, and free.



**I would like to subscribe to *The Point***

*\$12.00 for one year — 12 issues!!!*

**PLEASE MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: The Intercounty Fellowship of A.A.**

**MAIL CHECK TO: Central Office with this request for subscription to *The Point* — 1821 SACRAMENTO ST., SF CA 94109**

# Interview with a Longtimer

Jack N.

by the Drunk Whisperer

JN: My sobriety date is September 13, 1966. It was a long process. I had been in A.A. for about six years. I had been sober for a year in 1959. In and out. I joined the Alano Club in Chinatown in 1960. I was raised in the Irish culture. I was born in 1932 in San Francisco. Both my parents were young; they were both from Ireland. My mother died when I was three. Then we were in a foster home over in Oakland after my mother died. I wasn't abused or anything, but I remember them tying me to a tree because I was a rambunctious kid and they would tie me up. So then we lived with my aunt and uncle. But I always saw my uncle in the pantry where he kept a bottle of whiskey. We moved up to Noe Valley in San Francisco and I started grammar



school at five years old at St. Paul's there. Then it was World War II, all my cousins and relatives were going to the Pacific, so our house was just like partying all the time, and this is what I was seeing. Right from the get-go I was just looking forward to growing up and being able to be like that. I'd have a little sip of the highball at parties and a buddy of mine's father owned a bar down at 16th and Mission. We'd go in there and drink Cokes, but also in his basement, they lived around the corner, they had all this alcohol stock. So we'd go in and sit and drink that.

DW: Enough to make you sick?

JN: No, no. But on New Year's Eve coming into 1946, I drank a pint of Canadian Club and I remember crawling over the fence in the backyard and just falling over and climbing up the stairs and getting to the porch and trying to get into the pantry. It was the first time. I had alcohol before but never this effect. After that first episode, there was nothing I didn't like about it. I liked the taste, I liked the effect, I liked everything. I was 8th grade. My sophomore year, there was a drugstore out on Ocean Avenue. Each week we'd lift a fifth of whatever was on display. My junior year, I'd go with this guy to all the wedding receptions over in North Beach. We'd put a suit and tie on and go drink. It was dangerous for an Irish to be in North Beach, but I was with this Italian. I'm an ICBM, Irish Catholic Born in the Mission. They were heavy drinkers in the Mission. I was an apprentice photoengraver; there was this one guy, Nick, went to the A.A. meeting up the street at St.

Vincent's alcohol center. They had the South of Market group there. So I was aware of Alcoholics Anonymous in 1948 or 49. I was activated during the Korean War in 1951. But when I came back I thought, well, all that kind of drinking is behind me. I went to USF on the GI bill and met a nursing student at St. Mary's Hospital nearby. And we got married; I was 24, she was 23. We had an apartment up on Fulton Street and then we bought a home in Daly City and our children started coming. For the first time I was close to somebody that was seeing my drinking in a different perspective and she joined Al-anon in 1960. And she got me on Antabuse, but my compulsion to drink was stronger than anything. I would take it, drink, have the reaction, go back to work. Then I figured out I wasn't going to enough meetings. I figured out I could go to six or seven meetings on Saturday. I started out with the Night Owl at 2:30 AM in the Tenderloin. I belonged to the Alano Club. I had been 86'd out of there for drinking one time; my wife is picking me up, and sees I'm drunk and her foot is to the gas pedal and I rolled off the car and went flying on Sutter Street. And then the desire to drink left me. So that was September 13, 1966.

DW: Why do you think it lifted? Was it your wife running into you with the car?

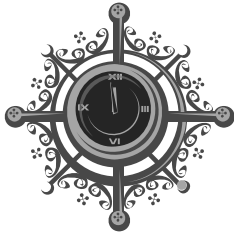
JN: No, no. That was just a little bump in the road.

DW: Well, what was it? Was it working the steps?

JN: No. It was a combination of a whole bunch of things.







# YEAR OF THE TWELVE

**Step Two: Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.**

by Bob S.

When I first encountered this rather puzzling step, I decided that I would have to come up with a concept of God, or better yet – alcoholic perfectionist that I was – *the* concept of God, or even better – THE ONLY TRUE CONCEPT OF GOD. During my then recent bar room days, I would have had that answer before you could say Jack Robinson, but in my unaccustomed dryness there appeared only blankness. I would have been stuck right there had I not noticed that others around the tables were staying sober (some for many years) who, upon inquiry, had very

different concepts about the power keeping them off the hooch. Some even said they had no idea whatsoever!

So what to believe? I was so desperately fearful of drinking that I simply cried out: I believe! I believe! Whatever is keeping these A.A.s sober, I believe! God, please help me!

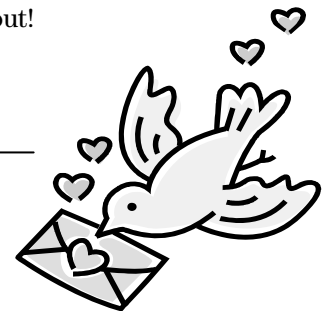
I haven't had a drink since.

I will never forget Wanda's method of contacting God during those Venice, California hippie days of the mid-1970s; she would simply call out, "Hey Man," and guess what? "Hey Man" answered every time, and she

stayed sober. One of Bill Wilson's spiritual mentors, Reverend Sam Shoemaker, told from the podium of the 1955 St. Louis International Convention, that Step Two is an "evidential" step, rather than a theological one.

Conversely, I believe Step Two is of the heart, and not of the mind. After all, if you research pages 46 and 47, you will be told three times that alcoholics don't have to believe; they only need to be willing to believe!

Check it out!



## Pass The Basket

Dear Editor:

I am aware that Central Office seems perpetually stretched for funds. [Editorial and "Gratitude Month" article in November 2011 issue – *Ed.*] I attend one meeting that routinely passes the basket a second time on the last meeting of the month specifically for Central Office

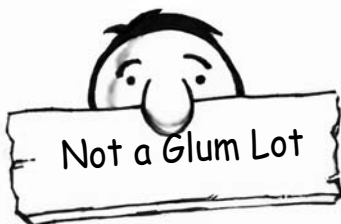
## Letters to the Editor

contributions – and I have proposed that another meeting I attend also adopt this practice (we are voting on it next month). If a majority of meetings incorporate this small-t tradition, and it becomes part of San Francisco/Marin A.A. culture, I imagine that Central Office's financial condition would be stabilized. I

wonder if suggesting this in *The Point*, in Central Office printed materials, and in meeting schedules could help spread the movement?

Sincerely,

L.C.



I did not know this:

When you drink vodka over ice, it can give you kidney failure.

When you drink rum over ice, it can give you liver failure.

When you drink whiskey over ice,

it can give you heart problems.

When you drink gin over ice, it can give you brain problems.

Apparently, ice is really bad for you.

Warn all your friends.

# Meet **THE MEETING**

by Rita L.

*Home is the place where,  
when you have to go there,  
they have to take you in.*  
(Robert Frost, "The Death of the  
Hired Man")

The Monday night Gold Mine Group is my A.A. home meeting. Not only is it the meeting closest to my home (or, as we used to say in college, my "home-home," to distinguish it from the home we made at school, or, by extension, the home we make in A.A.), but also it is the meeting where I feel most comfortable, most accepted, and most seen for how/who I really am – most *at home*.

I have been attending the Gold Mine meeting regularly for several years. For much of that time, I was heavily depressed and carried my huge monstrous bag of woe with me, a burden that took up several chairs. (Even when my bottom fell off, I followed program suggestions and put it in the proverbial brown paper bag and brought it to a meeting.)

I am immensely grateful that recently, I have burst out of gray despair and back into multidimensional Technicolor life like gangbusters. I feel this personal resurrection was due to:

The cumulative effects of 23-plus years of meeting-attending sobriety

A newly prescribed antidepressant cocktail, to treat my biochemical imbalance

The unconditional, through-thick-and-thin love of my friends and fellows in recovery

The fact that I have absolutely paid my depression dues

## When I Think of Home



Spiritual/psychological/emotional forces beyond my knowledge or description.

Regardless of my emotional state, upon entering the Gold Mine meeting, I am greeted with hugs, handshakes, smiles, jokes, and genuinely caring inquiries about my well-being. This human warmth helps me feel at home in my home meeting.

Out of the Diamond Heights night fog and into the brightly-lit, coffee-scented children's classroom where

*I feel a silly sense of humor connects me with so many of the people in that room*

our Gold Mine meeting is held, I enter, I am greeted, and I greet my recovery family, motley as it is – our little San Francisco rainbow. I feel a silly sense of humor connects me with so many of the people in that room with the miniature chairs; it is as if we are children together in the A.A. family, and our collective Higher Powers take care of us, if we let them (or even if we refuse to let them).

Here are some words of wisdom heard at my home meeting:

Start with the gift of catastrophe.

The road gets more narrow: the more I recover, the less I can get away with.

On service: giving back takes me out of myself.

You can't save your face and your ass at the same time.

We came for the drinking, and stayed

for the thinking.

Luckily, we're not all crazy on the same day.

It begins with me.

My Higher Power wakes me up in the morning, but I've gotta put my own pants on.

Show up even for the pain.

You don't have to be alone ever again.

We pulled a geographic without actually leaving, always looking to move away.

We drank to quiet the noise in our heads.

A.A. is not just old men in trench coats.

I cannot think myself sober.

Your ego is not your amigo.

What I love about my home group is the wild socio-chemical combination of so many different addicts/alcoholics coming together for healing. From big Ed to little Bennett, from big Jeff to little Adelina, from loquacious Jane Doe to silent John Doe, from perky so-and-so to sleepyhead, I walk in and I am surrounded by an accepting family. I have found a home in my home A.A. meeting.

*The Gold Mine Group meets on Monday nights at 8PM at St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, at 101 Gold Mine Drive at Diamond Heights Blvd.*



# FEBRUARY IN A.A. HISTORY

## *Is A.A. a Cult?*

by GFG

In February 1963, *Harper's Magazine* published an article written by Arthur H. Cain: "Alcoholics Anonymous: Cult or Cure?" In that article, Mr. Cain made the following conclusion about A.A.: "A useful idea has turned into a religious movement – and a hindrance to research, psychiatry, and to many alcoholics who need a different kind of help."

I referred to the World Book Dictionary to look up the word "cult" and found the following definition: "... a group or sect whose practices or beliefs are separated from generally accepted values and creeds" and "... the practices or beliefs of such a group or sect." I disagree with Mr. Cain. All of A.A.'s practices and beliefs are entirely within acceptable standards of good conduct in our society.

Mr. Cain goes on to state, "A.A.'s basic tenet is that only an alcoholic can help another alcoholic; that psychiatric and other treatment is usually unsuccessful; but that alcoholics can, by banding together in a spirit of mutual help and understanding (and 'by turning their lives over to God as they understand Him'), manage to lead relatively normal lives. Above all, they must face the fact that they must never again taken even one drink of alcohol." Mr. Cain then goes on to describe A.A. as becoming "highly formalized" and the meetings becoming "ritualistic."

I again referred to the World Book Dictionary to find the definition of the word "ritual": "... noun 1. a form or system of rites. The rites of baptism,

marriage, and burial are parts of the ritual of most churches. Secret societies have a ritual for initiating new members. 2. a book containing rites or ceremonies. 3. the carrying out of rites."

Actually, A.A. meetings have a set agenda, not rituals. For example, the opening, introductions, readings, shares, and closings are parts of an A.A. meeting agenda. Having a set agenda doesn't comprise a ritual, but Mr. Cain managed to incorrectly label A.A. meetings as "ritualistic."

It is interesting to note that Mr. Cain was a practicing psychologist who specialized in alcohol problems. For 16 years prior to the publication of his article, he was involved with both the therapy and research of alcohol problems. It must have been a jarring reality for him to learn about the higher success rate for A.A. members who stayed sober as compared to alcoholics who only sought psychiatric and/or medical help for their drinking problems. I would venture to say that Mr. Cain was trying to protect the financial interests of his profession. What would happen if alcoholics neither went to psychiatrists nor to hospitals



to seek help? If the growing number of alcoholics went only to A.A. meetings, the medical profession was poised to lose a lot of revenue.

Mr. Cain concluded his article with the following:

**"Try A.A. first, but ...** There are many such recovered alcoholics, both in and out of Alcoholics Anonymous. These men and women have learned one thing: neither A.A. nor psychotherapy, nor any other treatment is more than a bridge between alcoholism and real recovery. Good bridges, perhaps. I still believe that A.A. provides the best possible way, at present, for most alcoholics to get sober and start a new life without alcohol."

I will dispute Mr. Cain's statement in the previous paragraph. A.A. is not just a bridge between alcoholism and real recovery. Working the Twelve Steps, doing service and living the resulting life that is happy, joyous and free combine to form what I call real recovery.





**Dear Help:**

**I have been thinking about how A.A. defines “closed meetings.” On the San Francisco/Marin website it says “Closed Meeting = Alcoholic Only.” But the Pacifica website (as an example) defines closed meeting as only for those with “a desire to stop drinking.” I feel Pacifica's definition is more consistent with A.A. literature that clearly states the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. Nowhere does it state you must call yourself “alcoholic,” though that has become shorthand (just like “God” is shorthand for Higher Power, and an antiquated potentially alienating practice, in my humble opinion).**

**In the case of a friend of mine who is clean and sober, but primarily a self-described “pothead,” this has become an issue. This person doesn't like the majority of Marijuana Anonymous meetings because they have “singleness of purpose”; in other words, you can continue drinking as long as you don't smoke pot according to MA (!!). In contrast, she feels that A.A. – and closed meetings in particular – isn't welcoming of her. Of course, part of this conflict is her disease keeping her “apart from,” and I think no one would bat an eye if this**

**person identified in meetings as a clean and sober pothead, for example. Nevertheless, I still think the Pacifica definition of a closed meeting adheres to the A.A. principle that the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking, and not that it require anyone to identify as alcoholic.**

**How do I go about getting this changed?**

**Local member**

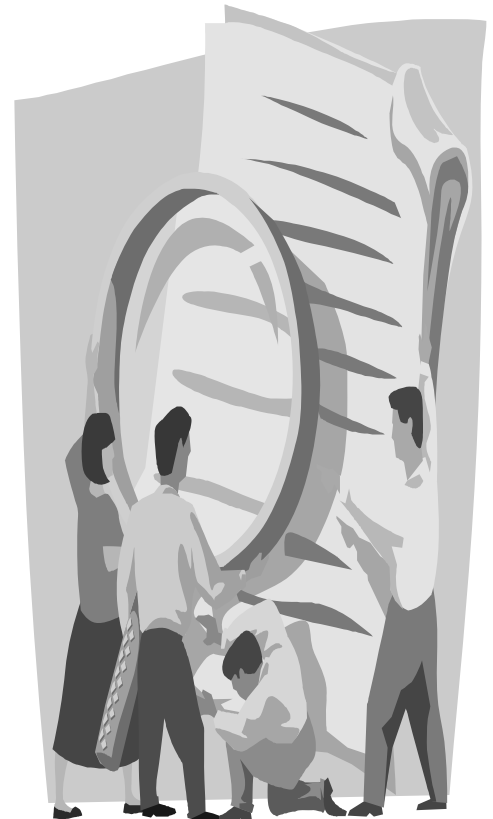
Dear LM,

Changing the definition of “closed meetings” in the San Francisco/Marin A.A. literature is an issue that is best addressed by our Intergroup, the local governing body. If your group has an Intergroup representative (IGR), then that person is the best one to take this issue to the next monthly meeting and get it into the pipeline for discussion and action.

In discussing this issue with others (in order to provide you with advice), I have heard that framing the issue in the context of a “self-described ‘pothead’” who doesn't want to call herself an alcoholic may not be the most productive course. Due to prejudices within A.A about people whose drug of choice may not be alcohol, and also to avoid misunderstandings about the principles of various Twelve Step organizations outside A.A., it may be

best to simply state the A.A. case for the Pacifica-type definition of a closed meeting. “The desire to stop drinking” is the only requirement for A.A. membership and that comes straight from our own program's literature and speaks for itself.

Good luck,  
e-volunteer



# Meet THE MEETING

by MEM

Ninety meetings in ninety days. I tried to make that 90 *different* meetings, searching for the promised “home group” where you knew you belonged. Queers, Crackpots & Fallen Women (QC&FW) turned out to be that meeting for me. It was there I asked a bright young man, who seemed to always be on the positive side of life, if he’d be my temporary sponsor. I’ve been the grateful recipient of his sponsorship ever since. After a couple years, I got restless and visited other groups. None clicked and I soon found myself without a regular meeting. Then several months ago I returned to QC&FW and am happy to be back home.

QC&FW was founded by Melanie L., a long-time Central Office volunteer and sometimes special worker, the famous “earring lady” of St. Anthony’s Dining Room. Melanie told me she was involved in helping to get the Alano Club opened in 2005 and 2006. She had a name for a group that she was anxious to start. As soon as the Alano Club opened its doors, Melanie was ready to start Queers, Crackpots & Fallen Women. Many people have come over the years since, saying, “I was so intrigued with the group’s name.” Most think it’s another only-in-San-Francisco crazy notion, but the name is rooted in A.A. literature.

The chapter on Tradition Three in *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* discusses how early groups promulgated endless rules to control their membership: “We were resolved to admit nobody to A.A. but that hypothetical class of people we

## Queers, Crackpots & Fallen Women

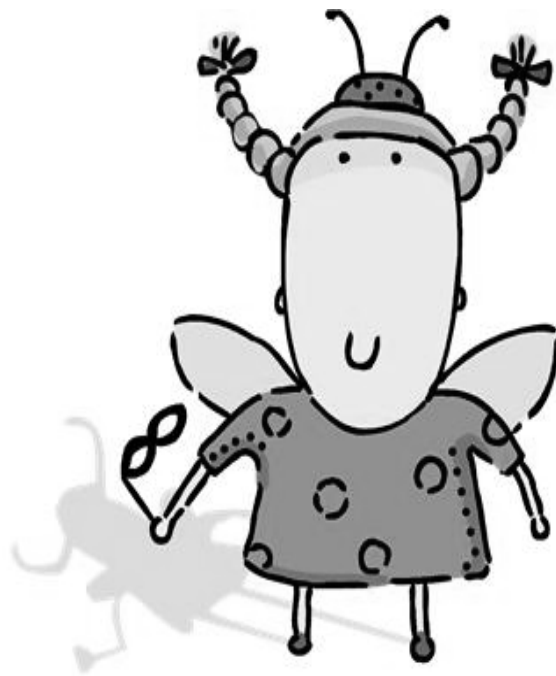
termed ‘pure alcoholics.’ Except for their guzzling, ... they could have no other complications. So beggars, tramps, asylum inmates, prisoners, queers, plain crackpots, and fallen women were definitely out.”

Over the years, Melanie says there have been many “Castro drag queens” who have been regulars, in addition to those who identify with the other categories suggested by the name. Many more are just regular, decent (well, except for the alcoholism thing) “straight” folk who attend out of curiosity, including out-of-towners who can’t resist checking out the meeting with the crazy name.

QC&FW is a steps and traditions meeting, that alternates between reading a step and a tradition each meeting (first meeting of the month varies this with a speaker/discussion format). Traditions meetings also use the illustrated pamphlet “Twelve Traditions” that suggests a different way of looking at the traditions through prose and cartoon images. This helps stimulate discussion in new directions.

Last year, the group moved from the Alano Club to the Baha’i Center. (The central message of the Baha’i faith is that humanity is one single race and that the day has come for humanity’s unification into one global society. A.A. is very welcome in such a philosophy, and the Center offers a spacious meeting room on the first floor.)

Like many meetings, QC&FW



membership waxes and wanes. Currently, a devoted core of some half dozen regulars keeps it alive. Service positions are often held by the same person for a year or more, so new regulars would be very welcome to help practice the spirit of rotation. Due to the size of the group, sharing is intimate and comfortable, and the meeting circle is a warm, friendly and welcoming space. There’s always coffee and a sweet treat.

Please join us at this meeting, whether or not you identify as a queer, a crackpot, or a fallen woman. All who desire to stop drinking are welcome. Oh, and as Melanie urges me to point out, street parking is always available near 170 Valencia between McCoppin and Duboce (just 2 blocks south of Market). QC&FW meets every Monday from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.



# Intergroup meeting summary – January 2012

The following meetings (and *service entities*) have registered Intergroup Representatives who attended the last Intergroup meeting. If your meeting was not represented, consider electing an Intergroup (IGR) Representative and /or an alternate so your meeting is effectively represented

Any Lengths	First Place	Marin Stag	Reality Farm	Sunday Night Castro SD	Too Early
Artists and Writers	Friday Morning 12 Steppers	Marina Discussion	Saturday Beginners	Sunday Rap	Women's Promises
Blue Book Special	Friendly Circle	Miracles (Way) Off 24th St.	Sesame Steps	Sunset 9'ers (Sunday)	<i>NCCAA</i>
Came to Park	High Noon (Mon)	Newcomers Tuesday Night	Sober 5150's	Ten Years After	<i>SF H&amp;I</i>
Come 'n Get It!	Huntington Square	No Reservation	Sober Saturday	They Stopped In Time	<i>SFGS</i>
Cow Hollow Men's Group	Keep It Simple	Noon Smokeless	Step Talk	Thursday Thumpers	<i>Marin Teleservice</i>
Embarcadero Group	Live & Let Live	Queers, Crackpots and Fallen Women	Sunday Bookworms	Tiburon Haven	<i>GGPAA</i>
					<i>BTG</i>

This is an unofficial summary of the January 2012 Intergroup meeting provided for convenience; it is not intended to be the completed approved minutes. For a complete copy of the minutes and full committee reports see "Intergroup" on our website.

The purpose of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous is to carry on the movement of Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) in keeping with the intent and spirit of the Fellowship as exemplified in the books Alcoholics Anonymous, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, and Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age.

The Intercounty Fellowship has been organized by, and is responsible to, the member groups of A.A. in San Francisco and Marin for the purpose of coordinating the services that individual groups cannot provide.

The monthly Intergroup meeting was held on Wednesday, January 4th, 2012 at First Unitarian Universalist Church, 1187 Franklin at O'Farrell, San Francisco, CA

Announcements: see also <http://aasf.org/ifbinfo.cfm>

Public information is having its annual meeting and a speaker workshop on Saturday, January 14<sup>th</sup> 2012. We talk to people about what A.A. is and what A.A. isn't including DUI classes and High Schools

Outreach Committee is still in need of additional assistance.

SF Teleservice has several openings, we usually have several openings. We answer the phones when Central Office is closed. It's a great way to get out of your head for

a minute.

Marin Teleservice: Elections were held last week and all commitments turned over

Concept One, Phil L: Every time I open a piece of lit. about the nuts and bolts of how AA works I am reminded how well thought out it was. The Concepts are the spiritual principles that guide how we work Concept I: "Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship." Concept I is essentially the same to service entities as Tradition Two is to the groups.

#### Old Business:

65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Party – volunteers. The party is at the end of the month; sign up sheet for typical commitments being passed around.

#### New Business:

1. Introduction of new Special Workers: Li L. and Markus H.
2. Discussion of "Closed Meeting" definition: We received an inquiry from a member regarding our definition of a closed meeting which says Closed Meeting are for "alcoholics only", rather than for those who have "a desire to stop drinking". A motion to change the verbiage "Alcoholics only" to "those with a desire to stop drinking" was M/S/C.
3. Vacancies on Board of Directors: We have two openings for the remainder of the term. Please see a member of the current board if you are interested. Do you need to be an IGR to become a Board member? Yes.

#### Officer reports

Chair, Margaret J: My last two years on the COC I have noticed that the best laid plans to achieve our goals are way laid by issues that arise unexpectedly and need to be addresses. Much has been accomplished and I believe we are grounded to start working on our actual goals.

**Treasurer's Report,** Michelle C.: For the month of November 2011 the biggest change is that our unrestricted cash went down by \$14K. As discussed last month, this was due to the payroll tax for pay out of the accrued vacation for the special worker who left. Regarding income and expense, we did have some expense savings, again due to salary and wages, rent expense savings and access expenses. The real question is "Did we meet our operating expenses?" We did pull it off at the final hour. Though group contributions were down by \$19K, a couple of large individual contributions came in at the end of the year and, when combined with expense savings, we almost broke even. Once depreciation is taken into account for the year, we will have a deficit, but our income is sufficient to meet expenses. That said, we are currently funding ASL interpreters at two meetings each week and the rent savings is incorporated into the 2012 budget. Question: what keeps us from seeking volunteers to provide ASL translation? This is an issue that needs to be brought to our Access Committee and then to the Intergroup as new business.

**Central Office Committee:** Primary focus was to discuss candidates for the Special worker position and what splitting the position into a job share would look like.

# Individual Contributions

to Central Office were made through January 15, 2012 honoring the following members:

## ONGOING MEMORIALS

Jonathan L., Matt S.

## ANNIVERSARIES

**John V. – 41 years, David J. – 29 years**  
**Linda L. – 28 years, Lucy O. – 28 years**  
**Ted R. – 27 years, Mr. Teddy Bear JC – 27 years**  
**Dan T. – 26 years, Kevin C. – 25 years**  
**Michael Mc. – 25 years, Andrew D. – 12 years**  
**Michael D. – 12 years, Eileen M. – 12 years**  
**Dana E. – 10 years, Colleen C. – 6 years, Tracy F.—6 years**

## COMMITTEE CONTACTS

The following is a list of names and email addresses for IFB Officers and for most of the IFB committees. If you are interested in doing service on a committee, or if you wish to receive more information about a committee, please email that committee at the address.

### INTERGROUP OFFICERS:

#### CHAIR

Margaret J. chair@aasf.org

#### VICE CHAIR

Rich G. vicechair@aasf.org

#### TREASURER

Michelle C.=. treasurer@aasf.org

#### RECORDING SECRETARY

Thayer W. secretary@aasf.org

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

#### CENTRAL OFFICE COMMITTEE

David S. coc@aasf.org

#### 12th STEP COMMITTEE

INACTIVE 12thstep@aasf.org

#### ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Michael P. archives@aasf.org

#### ORIENTATION COMMITTEE

Blu F. orientation@aasf.org

#### FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Michelle A. fellowship@aasf.org

#### THE BUZZ

Li L. thebuzz@aasf.org

#### THE POINT

Charley D. thepoint@aasf.org

#### ACCESS COMMITTEE

Brian C. access@aasf.org

#### TRUSTED SERVANTS

#### WORKSHOP COMMITTEE

Ted R. tsw@aasf.org

#### WEBSITE COMMITTEE

INACTIVE website@aasf.org

#### PI/CPC COMMITTEE

Glen R. picpc@aasf.org

#### SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE

Seth H. sfteleservice@aasf.org

We also prepared for a year-end inventory which was conducted on Dec. 30<sup>th</sup> and discussed goals and objectives for current board with respect to the employee handbook.

#### Central Office Manager Report,

Maury P.: Excited to have Markus and Li joining the staff, could not have two better people to work with. Please join me in welcoming them.

#### Committee Reports:

**Liaison Reports:** Dan NCCAA Annual Spring conference in San Ramon, please take flyer to your groups to distribute, [www.nccaa.org](http://www.nccaa.org) to pre-register (\$15) 1st conference was here in SF.

**SF General Service, District 06:** Andy: Admires how smoothly we've been running and appreciates the changes we've incorporated. This is an important time in General Service as our agenda topics are discussed; the conference topic is "Anonymity in the Digital Age". It is time for us to develop a group conscience on this topic. Between February and April a number of things happen: PRAASA, the agenda topics workshop and the last day to obtain any group conscience. At our next meeting we will discuss a motion to change the preamble from "men and women" to "people of all ages". A local forum will be held by our Spanish speak-

ing district July 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> (co-hosted by District 06). Local forum is like the GSO road show.

**GGYPAA:** Jen H. Our next event is a dance on 2/11 at Fort Mason, co-hosted by 8 YPAA groups all over the Bay Area.

**SF H&I:** Lynn D. Walden House has asked us to bring AA meetings in, they would like them to be in the middle of the day. Many openings to fill.

**BTG:** Ruby S. Trying to get BTG back and going again. Always looking for volunteers and those who have inroads to facilities. BTG offers to take those coming out of facilities and jails to their first meeting

Any IGR can propose agenda items to discuss or bring up an issue they find interesting by letting the Chair know in advance. If you are interested in something, propose it and we can discuss it.

#### Meeting Adjourned at 8:46pm

Next Intergroup meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday, February 1, 2012 at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, 101 Donohue, Marin City, CA. Orientation is at 6pm, dinner at 6:30pm.

# aa group contributions

Fellowship	Dec. 11	YTD	Marin Contributions	Dec. 11	YTD	Marin Contributions	Dec. 11	YTD
ACYPAA		1674	Noon Tu 12pm	100	200	Memorial Group Contribution		267
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch		332	North Marin Speaker Sun 12pm		170	<b>Marin Contributions</b>	<b>\$3,880</b>	<b>\$40,665</b>
Contribution Box	18	609	Novato Monday Stag M 8pm		15			
Fellowship Contributions		77	On Awakening 7D 530am		347	<b>SF Contributions</b>	<b>Dec. 11</b>	<b>YTD</b>
IFB	109	1133	Pathfinders Tu 12pm		171	130 Smokeless M 130pm		9
<b>Fellowship Total</b>	<b>\$127</b>	<b>\$3,825</b>	Primary Purpose W 830pm		151	130 Smokeless Th 130pm		5
			Quitting Time MWF 530pm		780	330 Smokeless F		13
<b>Marin Contributions</b>	<b>Dec. 11</b>	<b>YTD</b>	Refugee Th 12pm		210	330 Smokeless M		9
12 & 12 Study Sa 815am		479	Reveille 5D 7am		99	330 Smokeless Su		22
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am	341	3023	Rise N Shine Sun 10am		446	330 Smokeless W		25
Awareness/Acceptance M 1030am		200	San Geronimo Valley BS F 8pm	95	222	515pm Smokeless M		12
Bolinas Step Study W 8pm		71	San Geronimo Valley M 8pm		140	515pm Smokeless Sa		10
Candlelight Meditation M 730pm		94	Saturday Night Sa 8pm		132	515pm Smokeless Su		13
Closed Women Step Study Tu 330pm		439	Saturday Women's Speaker Sa 6pm		393	515pm Smokeless W		36
Cover to Cover W 730pm		539	Sausalito 12 Step Study Group	110	496	6am Dry Dock 7D		150
Creekside New Growth Sun 7pm		99	Sausalito Sober Sisters Th 330pm		229	6am Dry Dock F		53
Crossroads Sun 12pm		450	Serendipity Sa 11am		403	6am Dry Dock Sa	180	261
Customer		31	Sisters In Sobriety Th 730pm		158	6am Dry Dock Th		89
Day At A Time 7D 630am		235	Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm		542	6am Dry Dock W		96
Design For Living (Marin) W 7pm	220	220	Sober & Serene F 7pm		498	7am As Bill Sees It Fri		101
Downtown Mill Valley F 830pm	500	1386	Sober Sisters Wed 12pm		149	7am Grab Bag M 7am		332
East San Rafael Big Book		173	Spiritual Testost. Sun Men's Stag 830a	592	986	7am Living Sober W 7am		14
Experience, Strength & Hope Sa 6pm		78	Steps to Freedom M 730pm		394	7am Smokeless Sa 7am		9
Freedom Finders F 830pm		263	Steps To The Solution W 715pm		103	7am Smokeless Su 7am		205
Friday Night Book F 830pm		518	Stinson Beach Fellowship Th 8pm	50	200	7am Speaker Discussion Th 7am		461
Friday Night Flip F 1030pm		35	Sunday Express Sun 6pm		600	7am Step Discussion Tu 7am		109
Friday Night Gay Men's Stag F 830pm	35	35	Sunday Night Corte Madera Sun 8pm	274	547	830am Smokeless F 830am		359
Girls Night Out W 815pm		82	Sunlight of the Spirit Th 7pm		150	830am Smokeless Th 830am		20
Gratitude Tu 8pm	54	316	T. G. I. Tuesday 6pm		78	830am Smokeless Tu 830am		382
Happy Destiny F 7pm		178	Terra Linda Group Th 830pm		250	830am Smokeless W 830am		38
Happy Hour Th 6pm		78	Terra Linda Thursday Men's Stag 8pm	60	105	830pm Smokeless W 830pm		7
Happy, Joyous & Free 5D 12pm		4450	The Barnyard Group Sa 4pm		239	A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm	49	339
High & Dry W 12pm		150	There is a Solution Tu 6pm		133	A New Start F 830pm		300
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am		154	Three Step Group Sa 530pm		400	A Step Beyond Th 6pm		299
Inverness Sunday Serenity Su 10am		279	Thursday Night Book Club Th 7pm		22	A Vision for You (SF) Su 630pm		120
Island Group Th 8pm		330	Thursday Night Miracles Th 830pm		75	AA As You Like It Tu 530pm		88
Just Can't Wait 'til 8 M 630pm		125	Thursday Night Speaker Th 830pm	1300	2398	AA Step Study Su 6pm		41
Living in the Solution F 6pm		381	Tiburon Beginners & Closed Tu		1055	Acceptance Group M 530pm		60
Marin City Groups 5D 630pm		913	Tiburon Haven Sun 12pm		150	Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm		524
Marin Pacific Group Tu 730pm		50	Tiburon Women's Candlelight W 8pm		753	After Work Big Book M 6pm		269
Mill Valley 7D 7am		2099	Tuesday Chip Meeting Tu 830pm		350	After Work M 6PM		275
Mill Valley Discussion W 830pm		315	We Have a Solution F 7pm		126	Agnostics & Freethinkers Su 630pm		72
Monday Blues M 630pm	100	500	We, Us and Ours M 650pm		350	All Together Now Th 8pm	53	53
Monday Night Madness M 6pm		150	Wednesday Night Candlelight W 8pm		56	Alumni W 830pm	160	462
Monday Night Stag (Tiburon) 8pm		1777	Wednesday Night SD W 7pm		22	Any Lengths Sat 930am	119	656
Monday Night Women's M 8pm	50	549	Wednesday Sundowners W 6pm		200	Ariana Cafe Group M - F		100
More Will Be Revealed F 12pm		200	What's It All About F 12pm		450	Artists & Writers F 630pm		2688
Morning Attitude Adjustment		90	Women's Big Book Tu 1030am		680	As Bill CCs It Sun 8am		40
Nativity Monday Night Big Book 8pm		400	Women's Lunch Bunch F 12pm		100	As Bill Sees It Th 6pm	382	1371
Newcomers Step M 730pm		330	Women's Step Study Group M 12pm		75	As Bill Sees It Tu 1210pm		300
Noon Hope F 12pm		152	Working Dogs W 1205pm		750	Ass in a Bag Th 830pm		101
Noon Small Room 5D 12pm		130	Young People's Chopsticks Sa		44	Be Still AA Su 12pm	402	1013



SF Contributions	Dec. 11	YTD	SF Contributions	Dec. 11	YTD	SF Contributions	Dec. 11	YTD
Beginners 12 x 12 F 7pm		692	Franciscan Noon Discussion M 12pm		80	Noon Smokeless F 12pm		65
Beginners' Step Study Sat 630pm		382	Friday All Groups F 830pm	184	2047	Noon Smokeless M 12pm		144
Beginners Tu 630PM		20	Friday at Five F 5pm		85	Noon Smokeless Su 12pm		10
Beginner's Warmup W 6pm		379	Friday Lunchtime Step F 12pm		223	Noon Smokeless Th 12pm		8
Bernal Big Book Sat 5pm	487	1594	Friday Night Women's Mtg F 630pm		42	Noon Smokeless W 12pm		81
Bernal New Day 7D	309	3020	Friday Smokeless F 8pm		240	Off Broadway Book Th 730pm		55
Big Book Basics F 8pm	112	680	Gold Mine Group M 8pm		938	Once An Alcoholic Th 715pm		35
Big Book Study Su 1130am		676	Goodlands Su 2pm		316	One Liners Th 830pm		459
Blue Book Special Su 11am		223	Haight Street Blues Tu 615pm		418	Parkside Th 830pm		397
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	28	28	Haight Street Explorers Th 630pm		160	Pax West M 12pm		2098
Brokers Open Book Tu 130pm		225	Happy Hour Ladies Night F 530pm		103	Pax West Th 12pm	133	1485
Buena Vista Breakfast Su 12pm		71	High Noon Friday 1215pm	8	310	Potrero Hill 12 x 12 M 630pm		150
Bushwackers Sa 9am		26	High Noon Monday 1215pm		293	Progress Not Perfection Tu 830pm		183
By the Book Sa 10am		96	High Noon Saturday 1215pm		516	Raising the Bottom W 9pm		228
Came to Believe 830am M 830am	131	191	High Noon Sunday 1215p		292	Reality Farm Th 830pm		487
Came To Believe Su 830am		134	High Noon Thursday 1215pm	24	512	Rebound W 830pm		60
Came to Park Sat 7pm		510	High Noon Tuesday 1215pm		190	Refugee Th 12pm	40	100
Castro Discussion (Show Of Shows)		466	High Noon Wednesday 1215pm		25	Relapses, Rebounds, Retreads...		82
Castro Monday Big Book M 830pm		48	Hilldwellers M 8pm		407	Richmond Big Book Study Th 730pm		6
Castro Nooners F 12pm		85	How Was Your Week? Sa 10am		151	Richmond Step Study M 730pm		23
Cocoanuts Su 9am		484	Huntington Square W 630pm		776	Rigorous Honesty Th 1205pm		90
Code Blue Big Book Study W 7pm		178	Into The Sun Meditation Th 12pm		60	Rise N Shine Sun 10am	102	102
Come N Get It F 630pm		10	Join the Tribe Tu 7pm		1602	Room to Grow F 8pm		223
Common Welfare Th 8pm		368	Joys of Recovery Tu 8pm		37	Saturday Afternoon Meditation 5pm		495
Cow Hollow Men's Group W 8pm	135	933	K.I.S.S. M 6pm		114	Saturday Beginners Sat 6pm	435	1748
Creative Alcoholics M 630pm		195	Keep Coming Back Sa 11am		684	Saturday Big Book Sa 2pm		21
Dark Secrets F 10pm		19	Let It Be Now F 6pm		169	Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm		1003
Design For Living - Big Book 5D		33	Light Steppers Su 7pm		60	Saturday Matinee Sa 2pm		40
Design For Living - Big Book Tu/Th	83	273	Like A Prayer Su 4pm		199	Saturday Night Regroup Sat 730pm	149	1735
Design for Living Sat 8am		218	Lincoln Park Sat 830pm		40	Say Hey Group M, Tu, F 6pm		376
Diamond Heights Tu 830pm		125	Live and Let Live Su 8pm		150	Second Chance Th 215pm	250	285
Dignitaries Sympathy W 815pm		180	Living Proof Th 630pm		80	Serenity House	150	1800
Doin' the Deal Sun 10pm		60	Living Sober W 8pm		254	Serenity Seekers M 730pm	141	635
Dry Dock Discussion M 830pm		24	Living Sober with HIV W 6pm		1186	Sesame Step Tu 730pm		28
Each Day a New Beginning F 7am		1765	Lots Of Parking Su 6pm		20	Shamrocks & Serenity M 730pm	182	1108
Each Day a New Beginning M 7am		1292	Luke's Group W 7pm		124	Sinbar Su 830pm		127
Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am		2453	Meeting Place Noon F 12pm	254	463	Sisters Circle Su 6pm		562
Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am		868	Meeting Place Noon W 12pm		604	Six O'Clock Step Th 6pm	28	28
Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am		900	Mid Week Sanity W 630pm		11	Sober at State MW 1210pm		400
Each Day a New Beginning W 7am		1244	Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am	231	1393	Sober Saturday Sa 830am		404
Early Start F 6pm		2372	Midnight Meditation Sat 12am		129	Sobriety & Beyond W 7pm		139
Easy Does It Tu 6pm		96	Miracle (Way) Off 24th St W 730pm		41	Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am		321
Embarcadero Group 5D 1210pm		1582	Mission Terrace W 8pm		124	Sought to Improve Th 715pm		132
Epiphany Group Th 8pm		180	Monday Beginners M 8pm	126	867	SFPOA		371
Eureka Step Tu 6pm	76	152	Monday Monday M 1215pm		248	Spirit of San Francisco		90
Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm		213	Moving Toward Serenity W 830pm		202	St. Francis Men's F 830pm		240
Excelsior "Scent" Free for All Sa 8pm	60	228	New Friday Big Book F 12pm		116	Step Talk Su 830am		789
Extreme Makeover M 730pm		51	New Life W 7pm		150	Steppin' Up Tu 630pm		614
Federal Speaker Su 12pm		279	Newcomers Group Tu 7pm		20	Stonestown M 8pm		148
Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am		296	Newcomers Step M 730pm		360	Sunday Bookworms Sun 730pm	113	555
Fireside Chat Group Tu 8pm		37	Newcomers Tu 8pm		469	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag		902
Fireside Chat Sa 9pm		103	No Reservation M 12pm		257			

continued on p. 19

# profit and loss statement: November 2011

	<u>Nov 11</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>Budget</u>		<u>Nov 11</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense					Non-Bulk Postage	0	44	144	175
Income					Bulk Mail	390		990	831
Group Contributions					Total Postage	\$390	\$44	\$1,134	\$1,006
Group Contributions	9593	13500	133613	150000	Rent - Office	3664	4886	43308	51526
Honors	40		100		Rent - Other	75	75	750	825
Total Group Contributions	\$9,633	\$13,500	\$133,638	\$150,000	Access Expenses	340	625	760	7375
Individual Contributions					IFB Literature				
Individual - Unrestricted	105	1000	15683	11000	Sunshine Club	0		0	152
Faithful Fiver	1445	1137	13215	12537	IFB Literature - Other	62	15	145	180
Honorary Contributions	215	369	3755	4069	Total IFB Literature	\$62	\$15	\$145	\$332
Total Ind. Contributions	\$1,765	\$2,506	\$32,652	\$27,606	PI/CPC	55	20	103	220
Gratitude Month					Filing/Fees	0		93	80
Gratitude Mo. - Groups	1679	500	5807	10900	Insurance	0		2383	2915
Gratitude Mo. - Individual	375	480	375	480	Internet Expense	93	120	1156	1320
Total Gratitude Month	\$2,054	\$980	\$6,182	\$11,380	Office Supplies	0	135	1372	2085
Sales - Bookstore	7111	9500	100585	104500	Paper Purchased	0	170	2713	2410
Newsletter Subscript.	0	30	318	330	Software Purchased	0		145	
Total Income	\$20,563	\$26,516	\$273,376	\$293,816	Printing	0		38	
Cost of Goods Sold					Equipment Lease	0	207	4969	4938
Inventory Adjustments	0		40		Repair & Maintenance	262	262	5420	3078
COBS - Shipping	95	31	688	341	Security System	0		354	354
Cost of Books Sold	5058	6425	71690	70675	Payroll Expenses	198	40	651	435
Credit Card Processing Fees	29	291	3260	3201	Telephone	257	250	2664	2750
Total COGS	\$5,182	\$6,747	\$75,678	\$74,217	Phone Book Listings	87	87	952	952
Gross Profit	\$15,381	\$19,769	\$197,698	\$219,599	Travel	0	30	655	1020
Expense					Training	0		25	25
Bad Debt	0		0		Bad Checks	12		12	45
Sunshine Club/12th Step	0	20	0	220	Total Expense	\$13,249	\$19,261	\$212,242	\$224,977
Archives Committee	0	15	0	180	Net Ordinary Income	\$2,131	\$508	-\$14,544	-\$5,378
IFB Sponsored Events	271	500	1204	1500	Other Income/Expense				
Reconciliation Discrepancies	0		0		Other Income				
Employee Expenses					Interest Income	126	210	1905	2250
Deferred comp expense	0		7809	7809	Total Other Income	\$126	\$210	\$1,905	\$2,250
Wages & Salaries	6010	9430	103509	103035	Other Expense				
Employer Tax Expenses	555	780	11145	9520	Depreciation Expense				
Health Benefits	572	1300	15325	15050	Dep Exp-Comp/Off Equip	207	207	2277	2277
Workers Comp Ins.	47		846	792	Dep Exp Furn. & Eq	6	6	66	66
Total Employee Expenses	\$7,184	\$11,510	\$138,635	\$136,206	Dep Exp Lease Imprv	371	165	4081	1815
Professional Fees					Total Depreciation Exp	\$584	\$378	\$6,424	\$4,158
Accounting	0		1515	1750	Total Other Expense	\$584	\$378	\$6,424	\$4,158
Computer Consulting	300	250	1088	1430	Net Other Income	-\$458	-\$168	-\$4,519	-\$1,908
Total Professional Fees	\$300	\$250	\$2,603	\$3,180	Net Income	\$1,673	\$340	-\$19,062	-\$7,286

# Treasurer's Report

For the month of November, group contributions were \$5,067 under budget. Individual contributions were \$750 under budget. Year-to-date, total contributions are \$12,466 lower than budget.

Expenses for November were \$12,736 under budget. Employee wages & salaries were \$4,326 under budget due to the fact that the Special Worker position has yet to be filled. Rent expense is \$1,222 under budget, Access Expenses \$285 under budget and the Equipment Lease was \$1,577 under budget. Total operating expenses year to date are 5.7% under budget.

Unrestricted cash balance decreased from \$30,072.58 to \$15,819.40 due to payment of tax expense associated with Special Worker vacancy. The November cash balance represents less than one month of average operating expenses.

For the year, group contributions were \$19,633.90 under budget and individual contributions were \$10,358 over budget.

The total expenses for the year were \$17,556 under budget due to rent savings of \$9,146, Access Expenses were under budget of \$6,475 and Office Supplies under budget by \$649.

Though group contributions were under budget the individual contributions and the expense savings offset almost all the budget shortfall. However, in the 2012 budget, the rent reduction has factored in. Additionally we have been funding ASL translation at two meeting per weeks for several months. Therefore, we cannot anticipate an expense savings this year.

OVERALL RATING: POOR

SF Contributions	Dec. 11	YTD
Sunday Night 3rd Step Group 5pm	328	661
Sunday Night Castro SD Su 730pm		219
Sunday Rap Sun 8pm		504
Sunday Silence Su 730pm		197
Sundown W 7pm	638	1306
Sunset 11'ers Su		100
Sunset 11'ers Tu		285
Sunset 9'ers Sa		265
Sunset 9'ers Su	124	306
Sunset 9'ers Th		64
Sunset 9'ers Tu		110
Sunset Big Book SS Sa 730pm		74
Sunset Early Morning W 7am	90	173
Sunset Speaker Step Sun 730pm		870
Surf Tu 8pm		636
Ten Years After Su 6pm		1831
The Drive Thru W 1215pm		586
The Dry Dock Fellowship		119
The Lads Fr 730pm		259
The Leaky Cauldron Su 1030am		80
The Parent Trap 2 Wed. 430pm	28	86
The Parent Trap M 1230pm		180
The Pepper Group F 12pm		198
There is a Solution Tu 6pm		214
They Don't Know Who We Are		100
They Stopped In Time M 8pm		76
Thursday Downtown Th 630am		62
Thursday Night Women's Th 630pm		844
Thursday Thumpers Th 7pm		100
Too Early Sat 8am		1344
Too Young Su 830pm		16
Trudgers Discussion Su 7pm		360
TSWC		26
Tuesday Big Book Study Tu 6pm		218
Tuesday Downtown Tu 8pm		14
Tuesday Men's Pax Tu 12pm	610	1119
Tuesday Night Step Tu 7pm		89
Tuesday Women's Tu 630pm		15
Tuesday's Daily Reflections Tu 7am		285
Twelve Steps to Happiness F 730pm	258	258
Valencia Smokefree F 6pm		530
Walk of Shame W 8pm		346
Waterfront Sun 8pm	157	708
We Care Tu 12pm		162
Wednesday Morning Men's Mtg 6am		100
Wednesday Noon Steps W 12pm		37
Weekend Worker Sat 7am		90
West Portal W 8pm		83
Wharfrats Th 815pm		381
What It's Like Now M 6pm		300
Wits End Step Study Tu 8pm	17	339
Women Living Sober Sa 10am		240
Women Who Drank Too Much Tu		5
Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm	357	1477
Women's Kitchen Table Tu 630pm		67
Women's Meeting There is a Solution		527
Women's Promises F 7pm	98	892
Work In Progress Sat 7pm		450
YAHOO Step Sa 1130am		277
<b>San Francisco Total</b>	<b>\$8,022</b>	<b>\$100,051</b>
<b>YTD</b>	<b>\$12,029</b>	<b>\$144,542</b>

## WRITE TO THE POINT!

**The Point Committee values your input**

**You may write to us at:**

**Central Office  
1821 Sacramento St.  
San Francisco, CA 94109**

**or e-mail us at: [thepoint@aasf.org](mailto:thepoint@aasf.org)**

# February 2012

ISSUE 02.12

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

San Francisco CA 94109-3528

1821 Sacramento Street



NON-PROFIT ORG  
U.S. Postage PAID  
San Francisco CA  
Permit No. 3480